

**OFFICIAL MINUTES**  
**PIGEON RIVER COUNTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**December 9, 2005**

A meeting of the Pigeon River Country Advisory Council was held on Friday, December 9, 2005, at the Pigeon River Country Management Unit Headquarters. Chairman Gustafson called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Arch Reeves, Jack Owen, Peter Gustafson, Eugene Horan, Dick Myers, Bud Slingerlend, Dave Smethurst, Mark Ennes, Bob Bolinger, Jim Supina, Bob Hess, Ken Glasser.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mike Moreau, Phil Alexander, Don Huff, Don Spence and Tim Flynn.

**EX-OFFICIO PRESENT:** Rick Henderson, Brian Mastenbrook for Glen Matthews, and Joe Jarecki.

**EX-OFFICIO ABSENT:** Dave Borgeson

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Duane Shomock, Merit Energy; Ken Ide, Bill O'Neill, Mike Brown, Cynthia Watson, FMFM, Lansing; Judi Jarecki and Tom Wellman, FMFM, Lansing

**CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS:**

Chairman Gustafson welcomed everyone and wished them a happy holiday.

**AGENDA:**

Chairman Gustafson asked if there were any requests to change the agenda as published. Hearing none, he said the published agenda would be used.

**APPROVAL OF JUNE 10, 2005 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Motion by Supina, support by Glasser to approve the June 10, 2005 minutes as published.

Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2005 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Motion by Supina, support by Reeves to approve the September 16, 2005 minutes as published.

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **CONCEPT OF MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Chairman Gustafson said that as the Advisory Council representative on the Steering Committee that is overseeing the process of updating the Concept of Management, he does not have a lengthy report. The Steering Committee has not met since September. As a result of discussions at the September Council Meeting, Gustafson did write a guiding document (copy attached) on behalf of the Advisory Council that was distributed to the Steering Committee and to the sub-committee chairs. The history of Advisory Council motions was also distributed.

Gustafson said that final decisions about the process have not been made, but in general, the Steering Committee will put together a draft for public review. The update of the Concept will ultimately be a Director's Order that is shared with the Natural Resources Commission prior to approval.

At Gustafson's request, each council member that sits on a sub-committee do a report about the committee's progress to date.

Gustafson said that the Introduction in History Section of the update was assigned to the Advisory Council and that he has asked Bud Slingerlend to chair a sub-committee to make the recommendation to the Advisory Council. Sub-Committee Chair Slingerlend introduced his committee members and said that Dick Kropf put together the draft that was handed out to council members, and invited council members to share their ideas for improvement.

After discussion, Gustafson said it is agreed that Slingerlend and Kropf would update the draft as discussed, Jarecki would distribute the updated draft to council members who will get input back to Jarecki for consideration by the Slingerlend Sub-Committee at its January meeting.

The objective is to have a draft for discussion at the March meeting that will be close to a final product so that the council can make a recommendation to the Steering Committee at or soon after the Council's March meeting.

### **SCHMUDE OIL PROPOSAL**

Tom Wellman, Mineral and Land Management Section Manager, FMFM, Lansing, introduced himself and Cynthia Watson from his staff. He then described the Schmude Oil Proposal to directionally drill Antrim Gas Wells under Green Timbers from private surface locations and he passed out copies of the map of the proposal (copy attached). Council Members asked several technical questions which were answered by Rick Henderson, Tom Wellman and Cynthia Watson. Everyone was in agreement that if the project goes forward, it is important that the non-development leases must be written in such a way that they cannot be upgraded to some form of development. Wellman listed the reasons that Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division personnel supports this proposal including:

- The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund will receive value of that development;
- It is a good example of adverse drainage that is taking place on State lands which would be interrupted.;
- The proposal as it stands is consistent with the guiding principles of management for the PRC or at least does not contradict them;
- No new infrastructure would be needed in the PRC.

Wellman explained that the only applications of this type being considered are ones where an operator already has wells and facilities in place. He explained that if the proposal was approved it would be by direct lease only and not an auction.

Motion by Smethurst, support by Supina that the Pigeon River Country Advisory Council refers the matter of the Schmude Oil Proposal to the Council's Oil and Gas Committee and asks for its advice to the Council to occur after the update of the Concept of Management is completed.

Motion carried.

### **BREAK: 8:48 PM TO 9:13 PM**

Chairman Gustafson thanked Judi Jarecki for the treats offered at the break.

### **MATTERS FROM DNR FOREST, MINERAL AND FIRE MANAGEMENT DIVISION**

Bill O'Neill said that Michigan's State Forest System had its Certification Audit this Fall and that the DNR is attempting to have the Michigan's State Forest System certified by two entities. One, SFI, is more industry based and two, SFC, was developed more by environmental groups. He described the process that has been followed so far and said the results have not be finalized yet. But, the objective is to obtain dual certification.

O'Neill reported that the Natural Resources Commission said there does not seem to be a viable snowmobile route to connect Indian River and Cheboygan and so the DNR will not to continue to seek a route. O'Neill said there will still be pressure to make it happen, but at this time, the NRC's position is to not change the existing snowmobile opportunities in that area.

FMFM is challenged budget wise just like Fisheries and Wildlife Divisions. Council members may hear more about how Divisions will be creatively finding a way to make the budget work.

### **EX-OFFICIO REPORTS**

#### **Wildlife Division**

Brian Mastenbrook said the 14<sup>th</sup> best deer season is on record. He said check station activity in the NEMU is about the same as last year and expects the harvest about the same as last year. He has been doing a camp survey for the last 7 years in the PRC and this year's survey was average. Elk season started on Tuesday and as of 5:00 pm today, 64 animals were taken under ideal conditions.

Mastenbrook passed out deer goal information, said that public comment meetings were being conducted in January and invited Council Members to participate.

Mastenbrook said he obtained a grant to do some experiments revegetating plugged and abandoned well pads. Surveys have shown red pine and oak will not grow in high ph soil that is left on many abandoned well pads. He will be trying various techniques to figure out how to best reestablish vegetation on these challenged sites.

#### **Forest, Mineral & Fire Management Division**

Joe Jarecki discussed his written report (copy attached).

### **OIL AND GAS COMMITTEE**

Committee Chair Ken Glasser said that the Oil and Gas Committee met on November 9 to discuss the update of the Concept process. He described some of the questions that the Committee is researching. He said the Committee discussed concerns about heavy truck traffic for oil and gas activities on private lands to the east of the PRC using roads through the PRC and thought that issue would be followed up with at a future committee meeting.

### **WILDLIFE COMMITTEE**

Wildlife Committee Chair Reeves asked Council Meetings to read Doug Whitcomb's report about the Pigeon River Habitat Initiative (copy attached).

### **REVISION OF MOU WITH OTSEGO COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION**

Joe Jarecki said that representatives of the Standards & Limitations Committee and the Otsego County Road Commission were to meet to discuss potential modifications of the MOU due to the new Department of Treasury definitions. (The previous definition categories were construction, heavy maintenance, and routine maintenance. The new categories are: construction/capacity improvement, preservation-structural improvements and routine/preventive maintenance.)

Due to the update of the Concept process and Forest Certification, the meeting has not been scheduled. Jarecki said he plans to schedule the meeting for sometime this winter with an objective to have a committee recommendation at the March council meeting.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Invite Mike Roper, Otsego County Road Commission Manager and Otsego County Road Commissioners to discuss the Sturgeon Valley Road bridge and heavy truck crossing issues in the PRC.

Invite Dan Sikarskie to attend a Council meeting to discuss the Pigeon River Habitat Initiative.

### **ADVISORY COUNCIL 2006 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Motion by Bolinger, support by Supina to approve March 17, June 16, September 15 and December 8 as the 2006 Advisory Council meeting dates.

Motion carried.

### **ADJOURN**

Meeting adjourned by Chairman Gustafson at 10:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

W. Joseph Jarecki, Secretary